

ATTACHMENT A
REQUIREMENTS FOR PAID FEEDING ASSISTANTS
IN
SOUTH CAROLINA
LONG TERM CARE FACILITIES
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- 1. What is the intent of this regulation?**
Provide more residents with help in eating and drinking and reduce the incidence of unplanned weight loss and dehydration.
- 2. What types of facilities does this apply to?**
All Medicare and Medicaid nursing facilities.
- 3. Is it mandatory that states participate in the Paid Feeding Assistant (PFA) program?**
States have the flexibility not to implement a program for approval of PFA training programs.
- 4. Is South Carolina going to implement a PFA program?**
Yes. We believe that both the residents and staff will benefit from the PFA program.
- 5. If a state opts to participate in the PFA program, is it mandatory that all Medicare and/or Medicaid facilities participate?**
No. Facilities can decide whether or not to participate.
- 6. Can a person who has been through an approved 80 hour CNA training program, but is no longer on the CNA registry serve as a FA?**
Yes. As long as they can show proof of training from a state approved CNA program and are not on the abuse registry.
- 7. What are some other examples of potential PFAs?**
Nonmedical facility employees, part-time workers such as retirees, homemakers, older students, etc. who do choose to work only a few hours a day.
- 8. What type of resident can a PFA feed?**
FAs are used solely for feeding residents who have no feeding complications. They are permitted to feed residents only in the dining room and operate under the direction of a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse.

9. Will a criminal background check be required for PFAs?

Yes. The state licensure laws require that all direct care staff have a criminal background check.

10. Could a facility opt to use PFAs for one or two meals, but not all three meals?

Yes.

11. Do the same rules apply for snacks?

Yes.

12. Does this new regulation mean that families and volunteers have to be trained if they feed residents?

No. Volunteers can continue to feed residents and families can feed family members without being trained; however, it is recommended that the training be offered to both volunteers and family members since the facility is liable for the safety and well being of the residents.

13. Can facilities that are sanctioned for providing substandard quality of care continue to have PFA programs?

Yes.

14. What is the approval process for a facility to implement a PFA program?

The state will develop a core curriculum, based on the regulations. Facilities must sign a written statement which outlines the conditions of approval and will specify the requirements for the PFA program, including the usage of a curriculum that includes content of the core curriculum.

15. Can facilities use curriculums developed by national associations?

Yes, as long as they meet the requirements in the South Carolina Core Curriculum.

16. Will the State arrange for or maintain a Feeding Assistant Registry?

No. However, each facility is required to maintain a record of the individuals who have successfully completed the PFA training.

17. Will there be a competency test for PFAs?

No. They will be required to complete a state approved 8 hour PFA course taught by a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse.

18. How will facilities know if a person has completed a state approved FA course?

Everyone who completes a state approved PFA course at another nursing facility or at a state approved nurse aide training program will receive a certificate of completion.

19. How will this process be monitored?

The state approved training programs will be monitored by DHHS at the time of program recertification and DHEC will monitor during the survey process and provide the required federal oversight. If a resident has a feeding assistant, it should be documented on the resident's care plan.

20. If I choose to hire PFAs, how do I count it on the cost report?

Most likely in the area where the costs for CNA training are reported, however information will be provided closer to the time when cost reports are due.

21. Is any staff exempt from taking the training?

Any **licensed** personnel i.e. physical therapist, occupational therapist, speech pathologist, administrator, and social worker can be FAs without completing the training. CNAs are also exempt.

22. What is the effective date?

The regulations go into effect on October 27, 2003; however, DHHS will not implement until January 1, 2004